

News Release



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On San Francisco Bay

Creation of Newest State Park Culmination of 20-year Effort

BERKELEY – A 2,260-acre span along the east shore of San Francisco Bay Friday became the newest addition to California's State Park System, the culmination of a 20-year effort by East Bay citizens, government officials and open space advocates.

The California Park and Recreation Commission voted Friday to name the new park Eastshore State Park, and adopt a General Plan establishing guidelines for its development as a place for family recreation and natural resource protection. With Friday's action, Eastshore State Park became the 274th unit of the California State Park System.

"This is a big, big day for the people of the East Bay who have worked so hard to see this project become a reality," said Ruth Coleman, Acting Director of California State Parks. "We are proud to be a partner with the East Bay Regional Park District in this new park and look forward to our future progress together."

Joe Cotchett, chairman of the State Park and Recreation Commission, called the Commission's action "a historic step forward for the protection of open space in the East Bay."

"For decades, a dedicated group of citizens has worked tirelessly to preserve this unique and beautiful bay frontage," he said. "We are proud to make this dream a reality with the creation of Eastshore State Park."

Clint Eastwood, the newest member of the Commission, attended his first meeting on Friday and in voting for creation of the new park noted that he spent some of his childhood years living by the Bay. "It's a great tribute that the people of the Bay Area came together to give us this opportunity today," Eastwood said.

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The park extends approximately 8.5 miles along the eastern shoreline of San Francisco Bay from the Oakland Bay Bridge north to the Marina Bay neighborhood in the city of Richmond. The property offers spectacular panoramic views of the San Francisco skyline, the Golden Gate Bridge, Treasure Island, Alcatraz Island, Angel Island, Mt. Tamalpais, and the Marin Headlands.

The General Plan for the park adopted by the Commission Friday is the result of a cooperative effort by the State Department of Parks and Recreation, the East Bay Regional Park District and the California Coastal Conservancy. The subject of a series of public hearings in the area before its adoption Friday, the General Plan concludes that the new park should become "a recreational facility harmonious with its natural setting."

In addition to naming the new park, the Commission Friday classified it as a State Seashore and established two Marine Reserves as separate units adjacent to the new park. These classifications foster the "balance" between the proposed recreational uses and the increased levels of natural resource protection recommended for specific parts of the park.

The park includes more than 2,260 acres of uplands and tidelands along the waterfronts of the cities of Oakland, Emeryville, Berkeley, Albany and Richmond. Of the total acreage, 44 percent is designated for preservation and conservation of natural resources and 56 percent is designated for recreation of various types.

The General Plan for the park calls for a number of environmental enhancements, including re-vegetating Strawberry Schoolhouse Creek, removal of construction rubble and re-grading sections of shoreline, and enhancing coastal scrub and grassland habitats. The plan also reserves a large "no access" area in the Berkeley Meadows to accommodate foraging by raptors and the establishment of undisturbed nesting areas. There will be trails around the area, but not through it, in order to protect this area for wildlife habitat and use.

Possible future recreational uses at the park include windsurfing, hiking, biking and picnicking. Sports fields also may be created, and operated by an entity other than California State Parks.